

# CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

## Purpose and Goals

The City of Sunnyvale, California has initiated a process to improve its downtown. As a catalyst for this undertaking, a new Urban Design Plan has been prepared, addressing the special assets, character, and identity that make Sunnyvale unique. In addition, an Economics Market Review report has been prepared to identify and define current and future market conditions.

The Urban Design Plan focuses on three goals: establish a common vision for the downtown, define a unique market niche for the downtown, and create the framework to link together current and future downtown projects into a vibrant, cohesive place. As the plan is implemented over the next several years, it is hoped that Sunnyvale's downtown will continue to evolve as the community's heart and soul, an exciting and energized place for visitors and residents.

## Relationship to the 1993 Downtown Specific Plan and the Sunnyvale Municipal Code

Building on the 1993 Downtown Specific Plan, the Urban Design Plan incorporates many of the existing Specific Plan's planning and design considerations, but recommends certain changes and refinements. As such, the Urban Design Plan is intended to serve as a policy document to guide amendments to the existing Downtown Specific Plan, the existing Redevelopment Area Plan, and the Zoning Code and Map. It is anticipated that the amendment process will require environmental review, either full or focused.

## Development Time Frame

The 1993 Downtown Specific Plan is described as a long-term strategic plan with a potential 20-year minimum time frame for implementation. The new Urban Design Plan is also intended to be a long-term strategic plan, adjusting the current specific plan to reflect recent development trends and recent market forces that are currently influencing and shaping downtowns, including Sunnyvale.

The private development market is intended to be the engine that drives implementation of the new plan. Nevertheless the city will be an active participant, facilitating development efforts in private domains and initiating certain improvement efforts in public domains. Although build-out of the Urban Design Plan is projected to occur within the same time frame as the current specific plan, the private market will dictate the pace of development. As new development within the downtown takes shape over the next several years, the assumed time frame can be reevaluated and adjusted to reflect the real pace of development.

## Plan Area

The Downtown Specific Plan area comprises roughly 150 acres of a roughly 250-acre downtown. Although the Urban Design Plan addresses planning considerations that go beyond the boundaries of the specific plan area, it focuses most of its attention on the specific plan area.

Recommendations and strategies address two sectors: private domains and public domains. The new plan generally stays within the current specific plan area for recommendations to private development sites, but proposes changes and improvements to public domains both inside and outside the current specific plan area.



